Executive Proclamation
State of South Dakota
Office of the Governor

Whereas, Sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1908. He was orphaned as a young child, suffering a harsh childhood in a foster home, he persevered and became an accomplished sculptor and artist even though he never received any formal training in the arts; and,

Whereas, Korczak moved to West Hartford, Connecticut, in the late 1930s to begin life as a professional artist and, in 1939, won first place for sculpture at the New York World's Fair. He moved to the Black Hills of South Dakota to work as an assistant to Gutzon Borglum in carving Mount Rushmore; and,

Whereas, Lakota Chief Henry Standing Bear contacted Korczak in 1939 to encourage him to create another mountain memorial, saying in his letter of invitation: "My fellow chiefs and I would like the white man to know the red man has great heroes, too"; and,

Whereas, Crazy Horse was remembered by his people as a fierce warrior and visionary leader who was committed to preserving the traditional Lakota way of life, and Korczak was inspired to honor the culture, tradition, and living heritage of North American Indians, and thus designed a metaphoric tribute to the spirit of Crazy Horse and his people; and,

Whereas, Korczak was dedicated to helping his country preserve freedom, enlisted in the U.S. Army, and was wounded in 1944 at Omaha Beach. He returned to South Dakota after World War II in order to find a suitable mountain to carve to honor Crazy Horse and his people; and,

Whereas, Korczak and Chief Standing Bear dedicated the Crazy Horse Memorial on June 3, 1948. He worked until his death in 1982, when his parting words to his wife, Ruth, were "You must work on the mountain but go slowly so you do it right." When completed, the Crazy Horse mountain carving will be the largest carving in the world, at 641 feet long by 563 feet high; and,

Whereas, The family of Korczak and the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation have continued to "do it right" and have proceeded without government financial support, and remain dedicated to making steady progress on the Memorial's humanitarian goals; and,

Whereas, Citizens from the United States and around the world have been enriched by the experience of visiting the Crazy Horse Memorial and will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the dedication of the mountain carving on June 3, 2008:

Now, Therefore, I, M. Michael Rounds, Governor of the state of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim June 3, 2008, as

CRAZY HORSE MEMORIAL DAY

in South Dakota, and I join my fellow citizens in South Dakota, and friends of Crazy Horse from around the globe, in wishing the Memorial and the family of Korczak continued success and God's blessing on their work.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the state of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Sixth Day of May in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Eight.

M. Michael Rounds, Governor

Attest:

Chris Nelson, Secretary of State